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# METRO MIAMI



COMMENTARY  
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## Getting a cushion for future shock

How will South Florida respond to the black-out of 2003? Will local residents feel betrayed when the Miami Dolphins move to Orlando in 2004?

What will happen when a brain hemorrhage finally kills Fidel Castro in 2004?

The answers may depend on our willingness to discuss our future of Miami Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties before the future arrives.

A California think tank specializing in "scenario planning" has produced an intriguing report describing four possible futures for this region, ranging from a bleak landscape of declining economic vitality and ethnic isolation at one extreme, to the Western Hemisphere's most dynamic locust at the other.

Scenario planning attempts to illustrate the various projected futures by imagining the community's reaction to purely fictitious — but plausible — events.

The study, South Florida 2020: Four Scenarios for the Region's Future, was commissioned by the Collins Center for Public Policy.

The storylines at times are absurd — I laughed out loud when one scenario imagined that Castro's demise would result in "cruel celebrations in South Florida" — but the exercise is challenging nonetheless.

The scenario "should be used to generate discussion and argument, not as a set of prescriptions or scenarios as right or wrong, because they are not predictions of the future," author Gerald Harris of Global Business Network explained.

Harris guided a workshop of about 20 South Florida participants, mostly business people, as they developed their own scenarios and the imagined news events.

■ **Life in South Florida.** The region increasingly resembles "the so-called Banana Republic of Latin America."

The local population passively accepts a widening schism between the rich and the poor. Economic and political power is controlled by a tightly knit elite. Ties to Latin America keep the economy and business strong, but the social environment is oppressive and fraught with conflict.

■ **Epitome of the West.** Effective and innovative leadership, propelled by a commitment to "essential business and balance," guide South Florida to rival New York and London as a major investment center. Business thrives on many fronts. The region thoroughly embraces bilingualism that language-translation technology becomes a booming industry of its own.

■ **Falling off the edge.** The region never effectively addresses its social problems and neglects to invest in developing its human and physical resources. The economy drags, unemployment rises, public health declines. Middle-class parents pull their kids out of public schools, language grows as an issue of division.

■ **The Happy State.** The region's failure to plan causes it to miss its opportunity to participate in the developing global economy. Hispanic culture thrives, but black and white, non-Hispanic towns, followed by large businesses.

The area becomes an incubator for small businesses. The relaxed atmosphere of this new second-tier region makes it attractive again to retirees.

The purpose of the exercise isn't to predict the future, but to inspire residents to believe that the quality of our common future will turn on the decisions we make today, said David A. Harris, director of regional policy for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, which funded the \$25,000 study.

To read the report, visit [www.collinscenter.org](http://www.collinscenter.org), or call the Collins Center at 305-377-8488.

'That park gives our county pride. To see them close down, for whatever reason, is a travesty.'



FLOCK OF FLAMINGOS: About 400 flamingos living at Hialeah Race Track have become a signature of the track.

## HIGH STAKES FOR HIALEAH PARK



HEYDAY: Winston Churchill, at Hialeah Park race track with his wife, right, and the wife of John C. Clark, then president of the track, was a big fan.

## Police probing Holy Cross founders' past

The founder of Holy Cross Academy — where a nun was recently murdered — once operated a ramshackle monastery in Palm Beach County that was allegedly closed by church officials, records show.

Miami Dade homicide detectives plan to visit the now-defunct Monastery of Our Three Lady Heracles to try to learn more about Father Abbot Gregory Wendt, sources close to the investigation said.

Wendt is now the head of Holy Cross. A novice monk allegedly stabbed Sister Michelle Lewis to death there last month.

The murder suspect, 88-year-old Mykhaylo Kozel, has told detectives Wendt and another priest molested him.

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## Airport growth project rejected

County vote halts plan for Opa-locka

By Tyler Brooker

Rejecting arguments from a new aviation director who urged against what she said was a rash move, the Miami-Dade County Commission unanimously voted Tuesday to halt consideration of expanding Opa-locka airport to begin handling passenger traffic in about 10 years.

The vote was met with wild applause by about 50 residents of Miami Lakes, Hialeah and Opa-locka who attended the commission meeting to show their opposition to any expansion.

But Aviation Director Angela Giron said the commission didn't have all the information it needed to make such a decision.

Commissioners cited different reasons for killing the expansion study. Several said they didn't want to subject residents to the increased aircraft noise and road traffic that an expanded airport would bring.

Others said the county's aviation department should better coordinate with the state and federal agencies.

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## State finishes Tortugas reserve

Gov. Jeb Bush and the Florida Cabinet made the Tortugas Ecological Reserve a reality Tuesday, unanimously approving a marine preservation plan that will create the nation's largest no-fishing zone in remote waters off the Florida Keys.

The underwater reefs, 70 miles west of Key West and more than 140 miles from mainland Florida, is the result of a decade-long effort by an alliance of fishermen, conservationists and scientists to protect the lush coral reefs and productive spawning grounds of the Dry Tortugas.

"There's been a lot of work put into this to create a balanced approach," the governor said. "There are probably some opponents, maybe on both sides, but there are people in the commercial fishing industry, recreational fishermen and people on the environmental side who believe this is the right thing to do."

With fish stocks at a historic low and pollution and overdevelopment depleting the world's oceans, environmentalists hope to establish more no-

<b>INSIDE</b>	<b>CARL HIASSEN</b> JEB BUSH has decided to change his name in protest of his brother's so-called stance. By colleagues and constituents are free to address me as 'J. Bush' or... 'Gov. J. Bush,' he says. 5B	<b>LEGISLATURE</b> THE FLORIDA Marine push for a state that retains receives overwhelming support from an important Senate committee Tuesday, along with demands for the topic to go more for the local community. 5B	<b>DEATHS</b> JACK HALEY JR., film and TV director, 48
<b>EDITOR: JUDY MILLER</b> <a href="mailto:jmiller@herald.com">jmiller@herald.com</a> 305-376-3638 or 954-764-7026 ext. 3638	<b>ECOLOGISTS</b> POISONING REFORM, 8B	<b>6</b>	<b>SPORTS</b> REBELS LEAD, 6B

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